

UNIONVILLE HIGH SCHOOL

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February 21, 2012

Dear Parent(s) and/or Guardian(s):

This letter is to inform you that your 11th grade student will be participating in the Reading & Mathematics portions of the Pennsylvania System of School Assessment (PSSA) this March. The testing dates at Unionville High School will be March 20, 21, & 22. Any 11th grade student who is absent during these testing dates will need to make up the assessment(s) during the week of March 26th. This is a mandatory assessment provided by the state, and every 11th grade student is required to participate. We believe that all students have been prepared to do well by successfully completing the rigorous curriculum our teachers deliver on a daily basis here at Unionville High School.


To provide the best possible opportunity for your child to succeed, all 11th grade students will report to school and begin testing by 11 am. A box lunch will be provided for your child in his/her testing location, and a second bus run will be made available to ensure that every student has transportation. **Please see the attached schedule for further details.**

At the conclusion of this three day test window, your child will resume his/her regular schedule. Our sincere hope is that by removing the academic demands of the typical school day, your child will be able to provide the most accurate reflection of his/her ability on this state assessment.

In preparation for these assessments, we would ask that you encourage your child to get a good night's rest and to eat a healthy breakfast before coming to school. Attached to this letter is a flyer with information addressing frequently asked questions about this assessment. Please review this information with your child, and if you have any questions, please contact the high school main office at 610-347-1600.

Additionally, the Writing and Science portions of the PSSA will be administered April 19-20 and April 26-27 respectively. These tests will occur during the regular school day and will not impact transportation. Thank you for the continued support you provide for your student's education.

Best Regards,



Paula Massanari

PSSA Reading & Mathematics Schedule March 20, 21, & 22

- **Tuesday, March 20**
 - 9th, 10th, & 12th report to school at the regular time
 - 9th & 12th will be dismissed at 10:30 a.m.
 - **10th will either remain at school to take the PLAN Test or be dismissed at 10:30 a.m.**
- **Wednesday, March 21**
 - 9th, 10th, & 12th report to school at the regular time
 - 9th, 10th, & 12th will be dismissed at 10:30 a.m.
- **Thursday, March 22**
 - 9th, 10th, & 12th report to school at the regular time
 - 9th, 10th, & 12th will be dismissed at 10:30 a.m.

On each of these days our 11th grade students will report to school by 11 a.m. The students will go directly to their test taking locations, eat lunch, and begin the PSSA.

All juniors will have the option to drive on these three days, arriving between 10:45 – 11 a.m. to minimize congestion with the buses leaving between 10:30 – 10:45 a.m. **However, bus transportation to school will also be provided for those students who cannot drive.** The bus stops will remain the same, but the pick up time will be three hours later. For example, if your 11th grade student normally gets on the bus at 7:03 a.m., he or she would now get on the bus at 10:03 a.m. Additionally, busing will also be provided at 10:30 a.m. to take the 9th, 10th, & 12th grade students home. Seniors who drive will be encouraged to leave the school grounds immediately following dismissal to allow sufficient parking for the juniors when they arrive. Busing will be provided at 2:18 p.m. for those students remaining at school until the end of the day.

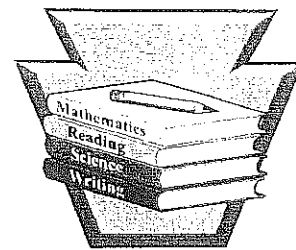
As discussed in each of the 11th grade English classes, **ALL 11TH GRADE STUDENTS SCORING PROFICIENT ON BOTH THE READING AND MATHEMATICS PORTIONS OF THE PSSA WILL BE EXEMPT FROM THEIR SENIOR FINAL EXAMS.**

TCHS Students:

9th, 10th, & 12th grade students will be provided the same bus transportation as any other day. The UHS dismissal does not excuse them from participation in their TCHS program. **However, 11th grade TCHS students will miss their afternoon program on March 20-22.**

**Frequently
Asked
Questions**

Information for Parents or Guardians
Pennsylvania System of School Assessment (PSSA)
Reading & Mathematics Assessment, March 12 – 23, 2012
Writing Assessment, April 16 – 20, 2012
Science Assessment, April 23 – 27, 2012



GENERAL INFORMATION ABOUT THE PSSA

Which schools participate?

All school districts and charter schools participate in the assessments. Nonpublic schools may also participate on a voluntary basis.

Which students take the assessments?

Except for a very few students who meet specific criteria for participation in an alternate assessment, all students are included in the assessments as outlined below:

Reading & Mathematics – Grades 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, and 11

Writing – Grades 5, 8, and 11

Science – Grades 4, 8, and 11

Who decided what the assessment should measure?

Groups of educators from all levels of education in Pennsylvania chose the areas of knowledge upon which the assessment is based. The groups included teachers, supervisors, curriculum directors, and college specialists. These groups also reviewed, edited, and approved the test items.

Who administers the assessment?

Each school chooses the person(s) who will administer the assessment. In most cases, these are the students' teachers, who are often helped by the principal or a guidance counselor.

How are the results reported?

Two copies of the individual student report for all assessments will be sent to the school districts and charter schools for distribution to parents, teachers, guidance counselors, and/or principals. The state will not receive any report with individual names included.

School-level reports will be used for curricular and planning purposes. School districts and charter schools may publish the results of PSSA testing for each school. The state will also release school-by-school assessment data.

May parents see the assessments?

Parents and guardians may review the assessments by making arrangements with the school assessment coordinator once the assessments arrive at the school. Confidentiality agreements must be signed, and no copies of the assessments or notes about assessment items will be permitted to leave the school.

If, after reviewing the assessments, parents do not want their child to participate in one or all of the assessments due to a conflict with their religious beliefs, they may write to the school district superintendent or charter school prior to the beginning of the assessment(s) to request to excuse their child from the assessment(s).

INFORMATION ABOUT THE READING & MATHEMATICS ASSESSMENTS (grades 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, and 11)

How long do the assessments take?

The entire reading and mathematics assessments take approximately six to seven hours to complete. Your school district should inform you about the assessment schedule.

What do the assessments include?

Each student completes three sections of questions for each of the reading and mathematics assessments. Some portions will be the same for all students, and some will consist of different groups of questions.

What types of questions are on the assessments?

Students respond to two types of questions: multiple-choice and open-ended. In a multiple-choice question, the correct answer is chosen from the four presented options, while open-ended questions require students to compose their responses.

How are the written responses to open-ended items scored?

The written responses for reading and mathematics open-ended items are scored by evaluators trained in applying a pre-determined scoring system. In reading and mathematics, scores are based on content only. Spelling and punctuation are not included as part of the scoring process.

What is assessed in reading?

The reading assessment addresses two major reporting categories that encompass the reading process. Students read a number of passages from both fictional and nonfictional genres and respond to questions about these passages. By answering these questions, students indicate both their comprehension and reading skills and their analysis and interpretation of fictional and nonfictional text.

What is assessed in mathematics?

The mathematics assessment addresses five major reporting categories. The proportion of items devoted to each reporting category varies by grade level. As a part of the assessment of Reporting Category A, Numbers and Operations, students respond to a special section of items in which the use of a calculator is not permitted. Open-ended items within the assessment require the students to show all of their mathematical work (calculations, graphs, drawings, etc.) and to explain in writing how they solved the problems.